

Two Way Prayer Guidance References in AA Literature

Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers published by AA World Service. 1980:

- “Emphasis was placed on prayer and on **seeking guidance from God** in all matters.” p. 54
- “In 1948, Dr. Bob recalled **the absolutes** as *‘the only yardsticks’* Alcoholics Anonymous had in the early days before the Twelve Steps. He said he still felt they held good and could be extremely helpful when he wanted to do the right thing and the answer was not obvious. *‘If I measure my decision carefully by the yardsticks of absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, absolute purity, and absolute love, and it checks up pretty well with those four, then my answer can't be very far out of the way.’*” p. 54
- (Bill Wilson describing a morning Quiet Time with the Smiths:) “Each morning, there was a devotion, he recalled. After a long silence, in which **they awaited inspiration and guidance**, Anne would read from the Bible. *‘James was our favorite,’* he said.” p. 71
- (Dr. Bob’s daughter Sue Windows recollection) “Then somebody said a prayer, she recalled. After that, we were supposed to say one ourselves. Then we'd be quiet. Finally, **everybody would share what they got** or didn't get. That lasted for at least a half hour and sometimes went as long as an hour.” p.72
- (Referencing the 1938 Frank Amos Report to J.D. Rockefeller, Jr.): “Of the 110 members then in the program 70 were in the Akron Cleveland area ... *‘in many respects their meetings have taken on the form of the meetings described in the gospels of the early Christians during the first century.’*” ... “The A.A. members of that time did not consider meetings necessary to maintain sobriety. They were simply desirable. **Morning devotion and ‘quiet time,’ however, were musts.**” pp. 135-36
- “**Morning quiet time** continued to be an important part of the recovery program in 1938-39, as did the spiritual reading from which the early members derived a good deal of their inspiration.” p. 150
- (From AA member Duke Paddock) “*When I started, they stressed morning quiet time, daily reading, and daily contact. Now, after 38 years, Katie and I still have our quiet time and morning reading.*” p. 150
- (Bill Wilson reflecting on why Wally and Annabelle in Akron had much greater success with alcoholics than did he and Lois in NYC.) “*‘I think there may have been times when we attributed it to their morning hour of meditation,’* Bill said. ***‘I sort of always felt that something was lost from AA when we stopped emphasizing the morning meditation.’*** (Bill and Lois themselves, however, continued this practice until his death in 1971.)” p. 178
- “According to Paul S., ***‘Dr. Bob’s morning devotion consisted of a short prayer, a 20-minute study of a familiar verse from the Bible, and a quiet period of waiting for directions as to where he, that day, should find use for his talent. Having heard, he would rigorously go about his Father’s business, as he put it.’***” p.314

Pass It On published by AA World Service, 1984:

- “Little was heard of theology, but we heard plenty of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, and absolute love” – the four principles of the Oxford Group. “Confession, restitution, and **direct guidance from God** underlined every conversation. They were talking about morality and spirituality, about God-centeredness versus self-centeredness.” *p.127*
- “Bill now joined Bob and Anne in the Oxford Group practice of having **morning guidance sessions together** with Anne reading from the Bible.” *p.147*
- “Lois described the Oxford Group weekend “house parties” that they attended as “a cross between a convention and a retreat. People came from far and near to be with one another, to worship, to meditate, **to ask God’s guidance, and to gain strength from doing so together.**” *p.169*
- (Bill Wilson on writing the 12 Steps) “As he started to write **he asked for guidance**. And he relaxed. The words began tumbling out with astonishing speed.” *p.198*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions published by AA World Service, 1953:

- (On checking guidance) “Going it alone in spiritual matters is dangerous. How many times have we heard well intentioned people claim the guidance of God when it was all too plain that they were sorely mistaken. It is worth noting that people of very high spiritual development almost always **insist on checking** with friends or spiritual advisors the guidance they feel they have received from God.” *p. 60*
- “Prayer and meditation are **our principle means of conscious contact** with God.” *p. 96*
- (On the use of imagination in prayer) “There’s nothing the matter with **constructive imagination**, all sound achievement rests upon it. ... well meditation is like that, too; it helps to envision our spiritual objective before we try to move toward it.” *p. 100*
- We discover that **we do receive guidance** for our lives to just about the extent that we stop making demands upon God to give it to us on order and on our terms. *p. 104*

Alcoholics Anonymous published in 1939 / AA World Service 4th Edition, 2001:

- “I was to test my thinking by the new God consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt asking only for **direction** and strength to meet my problems as He would have me.” *p. 13*
- “As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and **direction**, provided we took other simple steps.” *p. 46*
- “When we drew near to Him **He disclosed himself** to us!” *p. 57*
- “... praying only **for the knowledge of His will** for us...” *p. 59*

- “In meditation, **we ask God what we should do about each specific matter**. The right answer will come, if we want it.” *p. 69.*
- “... we ask that we be given strength and **direction** to do the right thing....” *p. 79*
- “... asking each morning in meditation that our Creator **show us** the way of patience, tolerance, kindness, and love.” *p. 83*
- “Much has already been said about receiving strength, **inspiration, and direction** from Him who has all knowledge and power.” *p. 85*
- “On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin we ask God to **direct our thinking**” *p. 86*
- “Here **we ask God for inspiration an intuitive thought or a decision**. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.” *p. 86*
- “... we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it.” *p. 87*
- (Finger-tip Guidance) “As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action.” *p. 87*

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